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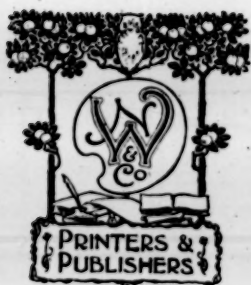
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PREFACE.

IN this volume an illustration is given of the opportunity for study in animal bionomics. Mr. Richard Elmhirst contributed his own observations on the "yawning" of fishes, a practice little recorded, but one which Mr. Heneage Cocks subsequently showed was long known to himself, though he had looked upon it as a well-known habit common to most, if not all, vertebrates. Other contributors have shown that yawning is not uncommon among Rodents, though Mr. Elmhirst had been unable to find any records of such a custom, proof being thus afforded of the value of recording bionomical observations which may wrongly be considered as either trivial or within general knowledge. The importance of such facts may easily be underestimated at the time they are published, but they provide material for future generalisations, and always receive a hearty welcome in the pages of 'THE ZOOLOGIST.'

In zoological speculation the comparison of animal instinct with reason is a subject which has long exercised philosophers, and is still to be regarded as an open question largely from the imperfect definitions of those two terms. Mr. Dodsworth has again opened the discussion in these pages by his paper on "Mental Powers of Animals," which has in the usual way induced other contributors to record supplementary facts from their own personal observation. This is another field in which many records may appear unimportant, but their value is of a cumulative description, and they supply the material for an

ultimate decision. In every speculation one fact is more than equal to many suggestions.

Ornithology is again to the front in 'THE ZOOLOGIST,' and British Birds still present an inexhaustible subject to field naturalists. A recent paper by Mr. Brock on the "Willow-Wrens of a Lothian Wood" is an example of patient work, and one to be continued in other localities. Mr. Stubbs has found several original topics of the greatest interest, while in "Notes and Queries" alone are published records and observations which cannot escape reference in any future standard work on the birds of these islands.

We again rejoice in the wider field of zoology that this Journal represents. Prof. McIntosh's memoir on the "Red or Precious Coral" is a definite example; Col. Shepherd and Mr. A. H. Patterson have continued to show the interest appertaining to fishes from both the anatomical and observational methods, the latter writer persistently adding to the list of fishes found along our eastern coast.

The present monthly number of 'THE ZOOLOGIST' is *eight hundred and thirty-four*. During all those many months a steady record of zoological observations has been continued. Our Journal has thus had a past; it is for our contributors to give it a future.



CONTENTS.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS.

ALEXANDER, W. B., B.A.

Recent work on the inheritance of acquired characters, 441

APLIN, O. V., F.L.S., M.B.O.U.

Summer in Lley, with some other notes on the Birds of the district, 41, 99; "Hardistrow," a name for the Shrew, 116; Variety of the Mole, 157; Notes on the Ornithology of Oxfordshire (1909), 281; Daphne-berries eaten by birds, 393

ARNOLD, E. C.

Records of rare birds, 393

ARUNDEL, WALTER B.

Albino House-Sparrow in Yorkshire, 339

BAGNALL, RICHARD S., F.L.S., F.E.S.

Records of some Scandinavian Woodlice, 223

BARRETT-HAMILTON, Major G. E. H., F.Z.S.

Common Shrew on Scotch Islands, 267; Greater Horseshoe Bat in Wiltshire, 307

BATE, D. M. A.

Artifices by Cat to secure its prey, 30

BELL, WILLIAM, Rev.

Lieutenant Boyd Alexander, 316

BOOTH, H. B.

A local race of light-coloured Mice, 471

BRITTEN, EDWARD

On the occurrence of *Vipera berus* in the Pyrenees, near San Sebastian, 266

BROCK, S. E.

Incubation and fledging periods in birds, 117; Nesting of the Wren, 196; The Willow-Wrens of a Lothian Wood, 401

BRYANT, CHARLES H.

Yawning of rodents, 391

BUTTERFIELD, E. P.

Notes from Yorkshire, 337; Late eggs of Nightjar, 392; Kestrel mobbed by Starlings, 392; Bees killed by wasps, 396, 435; Intelligence of a Squirrel, 434

COCKS, ALFRED HENEAGE, M.A.,

F.S.A., F.Z.S., M.B.O.U.

Bechstein's Bat—a correction, 74; On the yawning of fishes and of other vertebrates, 384

COOKE, A. T.

Impressions of a naturalist on the White River, Transvaal, 377

CORBIN, G. B.

Notes from South-west Hants, 198; Late eggs of Nightjar—was it a second brood?, 339

COTTON, T. A.

Chiffchaff in Hants, 158

CUMMINGS, BRUCE F.

The formation of useless habits in two British Newts, with observations on their general behaviour, 161, 211, 272; Fauna of Lundy Island, 267

CUMMINGS, S. G.

Nesting of the Wren, 158

DALGLIESH, GORDON

The Dragonflies of South-west Surrey, 192; Notes on *Culex vexans* and *Osmylus fulvicephalus*, 231; On the validity of the Yellow-necked Mouse to rank as a species, and notes on *Mus sylvaticus*, 241; Weasels and Stoats hunting together, 267; Additional notes on *Mus flavicollis*, 433

DEWAR, J. M.

A preliminary note on the manner in which the Oystercatcher attacks the Purple-Shell, 109

DISTANT, W. L.

Recent valuable additions to the

- Hull Museum, 34; An introduced Rhynchotal pest to rhododendrons, 395
- DODSWORTH, P. T. L., F.Z.S.
Mental powers of animals, 361
- DYE, B.
Lapland Bunting near Great Yarmouth, 34; Honey-Buzzard near Yarmouth, 34; Glossy Ibis at Yarmouth, 74
- ECUTT, A. W.
Strange nest of Blackbird, 226
- ELLIOTT, J. STEELE
Slavonian Grebe in Shropshire and Worcestershire, 75; Lesser Shrew in Bedfordshire, 158; Stone-Curlew in Bedfordshire, 227; Mortality among House-Martins, 310; Crossbill nesting in Bedfordshire, 472
- ELMHIRST, RICHARD, F.L.S.
Notes from Millport Marine Biological Station, 69, 321
- EVANS, WILLIAM
Common Shrew in Islay, 196
- FITCH, EDWARD A.
Short-eared Owl nesting in Essex, 270
- FORREST, H. E.
Common Seal on the Somerset coast, 268; Albino Wood-Mouse in Montgomeryshire, 307
- FORTUNE, R.
Terns feeding upon Sticklebacks, 229; Large clutches of eggs, 229; A variety of the Gannet, 340; Great Crested Grebe rearing three broods, 393
- FOWLER, W. WARDE, M.A.
A rare variety of Common Viper, 394; An albino Bunting, 471
- GURNEY, J. H., F.Z.S.
Ornithological Report for Norfolk (1909), 121, 197; Avocets in Norfolk, 196; Stoats (?) attacking Lapwings, 226; A variety of the Gannet, 472
- HARVIE-BROWN, J. A., F.R.S.E., F.Z.S.
Notes on the Mammals of Islay, 157; Six fetuses in a Whale, 268
- HEPBURN, THOMAS
The nesting of the Common Tern and Black-headed Gull in Colchester Harbour, 137
- HOLLIS, EDWIN
Albino variety of Common Shrew, 307; Variations in the dentition of *Erinaceus europæus*, 325
- HOPE, LINNÆUS E.
Natural History Record Bureau (1909), The Museum, Carlisle, 183
- INGRAM, COLLINGWOOD
Reeve in Gloucestershire, 159; Late stay of the Fieldfare, 227
- KELSALL, J. E.
Bechstein's Bat in the Isle of Wight, 30; Crossbills in Hants, 33
- KELSO, J. E. H., M.D., M.B.O.U.
Havoc wrought by the Starling, 144
- KIRBY, W. F., F.L.S., &c.
An undetermined species of Stick-insect found in Devonshire, 197
- MACDONALD, J. S.
Large clutch of eggs in nest of Mistle-Thrush, 226
- MCCLYMONT, J. R.
The Wolf in Scotland and elsewhere, 72
- MCINTOSH, Professor, M.D., LL.D., F.R.S.S. L. & E.
A brief sketch of the Red or Precious Coral, 1
- MEADE-WALDO, GEOFFREY, B.A., F.E.S.
Presentation to Mr. C. O. Waterhouse on his official retirement from the British Museum, 271
- MEYRICK, Lieut.-Col. H.
Lesser Redpoll at Hampstead, 269, 310
- MILLAIS, J. G., F.Z.S.
Note to paper by Mr. Gordon Dalgliesh on *Mus flavicollis* and *M. sylvaticus*, 241
- MORRIS, ROBERT
Late departure of Chiffchaff, 158
- NEWSTEAD, ALFRED
Ornithological report from Chester, 75
- 'NORTH QUEENSLAND HERALD,' LONDON CORRESPONDENT OF
The Queensland Dugong, 31; The Queensland "Barramundi," 35
- OGLIVIE-GRANT, W. R., F.Z.S., M.B.O.U.
Obituary notice of Dr. Richard Bowdler Sharpe, LL.D., 35
- OWEN, T.
A curious nesting site, 269; An account of a ramble with the birds

- in Anglesey and Carnarvonshire, 310, 341
- PARKIN, THOMAS, M.A., F.L.S.
Supposed occurrence of the Swallow-tailed Kite in Surrey, 270
- PATTERSON, ARTHUR H., A.M.B.A.
Some Fish-notes from Great Yarmouth for 1909, 63; for 1910, 451
- RALFE, P. G.
Ornithological notes from Denmark, 81
- RAMSBOTHAM, R. H.
Irregular appearance of Blackbird, 116; Observations on the nesting of Rooks, 227
- ROPE, G. T.
Reappearance of Bearded Tit in an old haunt, 74; Black variety of the Water-Shrew in Suffolk, 307; A Sheep-killing Horse, 433
- RUSSELL, ELIZABETH
Yawning of rodents, 435
- RUSSELL, HAROLD
Notes on the Mammals of Islay, 113; A note on bird-life in the Spessart, 229; Habits of the Chough, 391
- SELOUS, EDMUND
An observational diary on the nuptial habits of the Blackcock in Scandinavia and England, 23, 51, 176, 248; Humble-bees and foxgloves, 327
- SHEPHERD, Col. C. E.
The "asteriscus" in Fishes, 57; Comparisons of otoliths found in Fishes, 292; Pharyngeal teeth of Fishes, 418
- SHERBORN, C. DAVIES
Swan-marks, 159
- SIDDALL, C. KINGSLEY
Notes on the breeding of the Great Tit, 207; Red-backed Shrike breeding in Merionethshire, 309
- STUBBS, FREDERICK J.
A lost British bird, 150, 380; The mechanism of plumage in water-birds, 201; The Nightingale in Lancashire, a new record, 308; The Egret in Britain, 380; Kestrel and Starlings, 435; The colour of the Kingfisher, 462
- SWINTON, A. H.
The vocal and instrumental music of insects, 299, 426
- THORPE, D. LOSH
Natural History Record Bureau (1909), The Museum, Carlisle, 183
- TODD, WILLIAM A.
Observations in North-east Surrey (1909), 75
- TUCK, Rev. JULIAN G., M.A.
Notes on nest-boxes, 315; The Crossbill in captivity, 436
- WARREN, ROBERT
Black-tailed Godwits in Co. Cork, 34, 116; Sandwich Terns and White Wagtails in Ireland, 228; Nightingale and Willow-Wren in captivity, 339; Early building of Herons, 340; Herons breeding twice in the season, 341; Rare American Teal in Co. Cork, 436
- WATERHOUSE, C. O.
Obituary notice of Edward Saunders, F.R.S., 77
- WATT, HUGH BOYD
Bibliography of London birds, 386

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF SUBJECTS.

- Abramis brama*, 57, 58; asteriscus of (fig. 22), 59
Acanthias vulgaris, 64, 458
Accentor modularis, 96
Acentropus niveus, 426
Acerina vulgaris, 452
Acherontia atropos, 431
Acipenser sturio, 298
 Acquired characters, the inheritance of, recent work on, 441
Acredula caudata, 210, 230
Acrocephalus palustris, 96; phragmitis, 96; streperus, 96
Acronycta psi, 430; tridens, 430
Adamsia palliata, 69; sp. ? , 69
Ægialitis cantiana, 98; euronica, 98; hiaticula, 98
Ægithaliscus erythrocephalus, 372
Ælurichthys gronovii, 294, 295; otolith of (fig. 4), 294
Æpyceros melampus, 379
Æschna grandis, 193
Agrion puella, 194; pulchellum, 194
Alauda arvensis, 97; cristata, 97
Alcedo ispida, 463
 Alecyonarians collected in Indian Ocean, 400
Alypia octomaculata, 428
Alytes obstetricans, 446, 449
Amia calva, 296, 418
Anas boscas, 97
 Anglesey and Carnarvon, ramble with birds of, 310, 341
Anguis fragilis, 185
 Animal kingdom, &c., concealing-coloration in, 233
 Animals, mental powers of, 361
Anthus pratensis, 97; trivialis, 97
Aphrodite aculeata, 273
Aplecta nebulosa, 430
Apogon rex mullorum (Plate II., fig. 3), 423
Aporophyla nigra, 430
Aprodemus sylvaticus, 115
Arctia caja, 442
Arcyptera fuscus, 299
Ardea cinerea, 97; garzetta (?), 150, 380
Arius gagora, 58, 293, 295, 296; asteriscus of (fig. 19), 59; otolith of (fig. 19), 298
Armadillidium album, 225; vulgare, 224; nasatum, 223, 224; pictum, 224
 "Asteriscus" in fishes, 57
Auxis rochei, 292, 293; otolith of (fig. 2), 293
 Avocet, 130, 196
Bacillus geisovii (?), 197
Bagarius yarrellii, 418
Balanoptera musculus, 268
 "Barramundi" (Giant Perch), 35
 Bat, Bechstein's, in Isle of Wight, &c., 30, 74; Greater Horseshoe, in Wiltshire, 307
 Bats in Islay, 113
 Bees killed by wasps, 337, 396
Bernicla nigrans, 123
Beryx splendens, 293, 294, 295; otolith of (fig. 9), 293
 Bibliography of London birds, 386
 Bird-life in the Spessart, Bavaria, 229
 Bird, a lost British, 150, 380; and mammal reservations in Alaska, 278
 Birds added to Hull Museum, 34; of Lley, 41, 99,—Kent, 78,—Tasmania and Dependencies, 275,—New York, 317; observed in Denmark, 96; incubation and fledging periods in, 117; slaughtered in Hawaiian Islands' bird-reservation, 120; migration of, 129, 132; Water, mechanism of plumage in, 201; in Anglesey and Carnarvon, a ramble with, 310, 341; Land, littoral feeding habits of, 323; London, bibliography of, 386; records of rare, 393; Daphne-berries, eaten by, 394; foreign, for cage and aviary, 397; North-American, check-list of, 398; list of British, 399
 Birds, nests, and eggs found in British Isles, 294
 Blackbird, irregular appearance of, 116; strange nest of, 226
 Blackcock, observational diary on the nuptial habits of, in Scandinavia and England, 23, 51, 176, 248
Blennius gattorugine, 293, 295; otolith of (fig. 4), 293

Bombus hypnorum, 327, 329; *lucorum*, 329, 337, 396; *mastrucatus*, 328, 334; *mortuucatus*, 333; *terrestris*, 327, 334; sp. ?, 327

BOOKS NOTICED:—

Man and Nature on Tidal Waters, by Arthur H. Patterson, 39

Indian Insect Life, a Manual of the Insects of the Plains (Tropical India), by H. Maxwell-Lefroy, assisted by F. M. Howlett, 40

A History of the Birds of Kent, by Norman F. Ticehurst, 78

Nimrod, Ramrod, Fishing-rod, and Nature Tales, by J. Whitaker, 80

Life-history and Habits of the Salmon, Sea-trout, Trout, and other Freshwater Fish, by P. D. Malloch, 160

Concealing-coloration in the Animal Kingdom, &c., being a summary of Abbott H. Thayer's Discoveries, by Gerald H. Thayer, 233

The Vertebrate Fauna of Cheshire and Liverpool Bay, edited by T. A. Coward, 234

Experiments on the Generation of Insects, by Francesco Kedi, 236

The British Freshwater Rhizopoda and Heliozoa, by James Cash, assisted by John Hopkinson, 238

Bulletin of Entomological Research, 239

The British Bird Book, an Account of all the Birds, Nests, and Eggs found in the British Isles, edited by F. B. Kirkman, 274

A Handbook of the Birds of Tasmania and its Dependencies, by Frank Mervyn Littler, 275

A Synonymic Catalogue of Orthoptera, by W. F. Kirby, 276

Birds of New York, by Elon Howard Eaton, 317

The Subantarctic Islands of New Zealand—Reports on the Geophysics, Geology, Zoology, and Botany, &c., edited by Charles Chilton, 342

Life of William Macgillivray, by William Macgillivray, with a scientific appreciation by Prof. J. Arthur Thomson, 344

Faune des Mammifères d'Europe, par E. L. Trouessart, 345

Foreign Birds for Cage and Aviary, by Arthur G. Butler, 397

Check-list of North-American Birds, 398

A List of British Birds, showing at a glance the exact Status of each Species, by W. R. Ogilvie-Grant, 369

An Account of the Aleyonarians collected by the Royal Indian Marine Survey Ship 'Investigator,' by J. Arthur Thomson and J. J. Simpson, with a Report on the Species of *Dendronephthya*, by W. D. Henderson, 400

Reptiles of the World, by Raymond L. Ditmars, 437

A Monograph of British Nudi-branchiate Mollusca (Supplementary), by Sir Charles Eliot; figures by the late Joshua Alder and Albany Hancock, and others, 438

A History of British Mammals, by Gerald E. H. Barrett-Hamilton, 440

Bourne, Prof. G. C., Address to Zoological Section of British Association (1910), 347

Brama raii, 293; otolith of (fig. 3), 293

Breeding of Common Tern and Black-headed Gull in Colchester Harbour, 137; Great Tit, 207; Red-backed Shrike in Merionethshire, 309; early, of Heron, 340,—twice in the season, 341; of Tern, at Omai, New Zealand, 279

'Bulletin of Entomological Research,' 239

Bunting, Lapland, near Yarmouth, 34; Ortolan, 132; Reed, 76

Buzzard, Honey, near Yarmouth, 34

Calamichthys calabaricus, 296

Calcarius lapponicus, 34

Calidris arenaria, 98

Calopteryx splendens, 194; *virgo*, 193

Canis aureus, 370

Cantharus lineatus, 58; *asteriscus* of (fig. 5), 59

Capreolus caprea, 114

Caprimulgus europæus, 339, 392

Caradrina brevilinea, 429; *subtusa*, 429

Caranx armatus, 58,—*asteriscus* of

(fig. 11), 59; trachurus, 58, 293,—
 asteriscus of (fig. 10), 59,—otolith
 of (fig. 7), 293
Carassius gibelio, 63; *vulgaris*, 63
Carduelis elegans, 97
 Cat, artifices by, to secure its prey, 30
Catocala concumbens, 430; *parta*,
 430
Catopsilia spp., 432
Centropistes hepatus (Plate II., fig.
 4), 423
Cephalophus grimmi, 377
Cervicapra arundinum, 378
Cervus dama, 114; *elaphus*, 114
Chanos salmoneus, 58; *asteriscus* of
 (fig. 25), 59
Charadrius pluvialis, 98
Chelidon urbica, 97
Chen hyperboreus, 160
 Chester, ornithological report from,
 75
 Chiffchaff, 76, 158
Chorthippus albomarginatus, 305;
dorsatus, 305; *parallelus*, 304
 Chough at Lley, 46; habits of, 391
Chrysotis, 469
Ciconia alba, 97
Clupea finta, 419; *harengus*, 61;
pilchardus, 61
Clupeida, 61
Cæreba, 463
Columba ænas, 98; *palumbus*, 97
Colymbus arcticus, 75; *glacialis*, 75
 Concealing-coloration in animal king-
 dom, &c., 233
Conger niger, 323
Conistra erythrocephala, 429
 Coot, 77
 Coral, Red or Precious, a brief sketch
 of, 1
Corallium boshuensis, 19; *elatus*,
 19, 21; *inutile*, 19; *japonicum*, 18,
 21; *johnsoni*, 17; *konojoi*, 19, 21;
pusillum, 19; *rubrum*, 2; *sulca-*
tum, 19
Cordulia ænea, 193
Corvus corax, 93, 97, 393; *cornix*,
 97; *corone*, 230, 323; *frugilegus*,
 97, 227; *macrorhynchus*, 364, 374;
monedula, 97; *splendens*, 363
Corydalis brogniarti, 426; *cornuta*,
 426
Cotile riparia, 97
Cottus scorpius, 323
 COUNTY RECORDS:—
Bedfordshire—Lesser Shrew, 158;
 Stone-Curlew, 227; Crossbill,
 472

Berkshire—Bechstein's Bat, 74
Berwickshire—Cat and its prey,
 30
Buckinghamshire — Common
 Shrew, 307
Cheshire — Ornithological notes,
 75; Wren, Common, 158; Ver-
 tebrate Fauna of, 234
Cumberland—Stone-Curlew, 183;
 Natural History Record Bureau,
 183
Derbyshire—Mistle-Thrush, 226
Devonshire — An undetermined
 species of Stick-insect, 197;
 Fauna of Lundy Island, 267;
 Weasels and Stoats hunting
 together, 267; *Erinaceus euro-*
pæus, 325
Essex—Common Tern, 137; Black-
 headed Gull, 137; Short-eared
 Owl, 270; Kestrel and Starlings,
 435
Gloucestershire—Reeve, 159
Hampshire—Bechstein's Bat, 30,
 74; Crossbill, 33; Bearded Tit,
 74; Starling, 144; Chiffchaff,
 158; Notes, 198; Nightjar, 339
Kent—Fieldfare, 227
Lancashire — Blackbird, 116;
 Rooks, 227; Nightingale, 308
Middlesex—Lesser Redpoll, 269;
 310; Bibliography of London
 birds, 386; *Stephanitis rhodo-*
dendri, 395; Yawning of White
 Rat, 435
Monmouth—Blackbird, 226
Norfolk — Lapland Bunting, 34;
 Honey-Buzzard, 34; Fish-notes
 from Yarmouth, 63, 451; Smelt
 fishery (Yarmouth), 67, 459;
 Glossy Ibis, 74; Ornithological
 report, 121, 197; Avocet, 130,
 196; Stoats (?) attacking Lap-
 wings, 226; Black-tailed Godwit,
 393; Barred Warbler, 393;
Pelamys sarda, 454; Herring
 fishery (Yarmouth), 456, 459;
 Gannet, 472
Oxfordshire—Shrew, 116; Mole,
 157; Ornithology of, 281; Daphne
 berries eaten by birds, 394; Com-
 mon Viper, 394; Bunting, 471
Shropshire—Slavonian Grebe, 75;
 House-Martin, 810
Somersetshire — Common Seal,
 268
Suffolk—Bearded Tit, 74; Water-
 Shrew, 307; Nest-boxes, 315;

- A sheep-killing Horse, 433;
 Crossbill in captivity, 436; Velvet Fiddler Crab, 461
Surrey—Ornithological notes, 75;
 Dragon-flies, 192; *Culex vexans*, 231; *Osmylus fulvicephalus*, 231; Swallow-tailed Kite, 270; Black Tern, 393; Spotted Fly-catcher, 393
Sussex—Chiffchaff, 158; Yawning of rodents, 391; *Mus flavicollis*, 433
Westmorland—Golden Oriole, 184
Wiltshire—Greater Horseshoe Bat, 307
Worcestershire—Slavonian Grebe, 75; Local race of light-coloured Mice, 471
Yorkshire—Additions to Hull Museum, 34; Notes, 337; House-Sparrow, 339; Gannet, 340; Late eggs of Nightjar, 392; Kestrel mobbed by Starlings, 392; Great Crested Grebe, 393; Bees killed by wasps, 396; Humble-bees and foxgloves, 396; Squirrel, 434
Crangon vulgaris, 68
 "Creative thought," 319
 Creeper, Tree, 76
Crex pratensis, 98
 Cromer Lighthouse, Sky-Larks and Starlings slain at (Plate I.), 124
 Crossbill in Hants, 33; cone detached from Scotch-fir by (fig.), 129; migration of, 129; in captivity, 436; nesting in Bedfordshire, 472
Ctenolabrus rupestris, 63, 323, 451
 Cuckoo, variations in call of, 80; egg-depositing by, 126; eggs and young in Pied Wagtail's nest, 126
Cucullia umbratica, 429; *verbasci*, 429
Cuculus canorus, 80, 97, 126
Culex pipiens, 232; *vexans*, 231
 Curlew, Stone, in Cumberland, 183; in Bedfordshire, 227
Cyprinidæ, 57, 58, 60, 61, 419
Cyprinus carpio, 58, 293, 296, 323, 419,—*asteriscus* of (fig. 21), 59,—otolith of (fig. 16), 293; *specularis*, 63
Cypselus apus, 97
Dafila acuta, 97
Daulias philomela, 96; *lusciniæ*, 308
 Deer, Fallow, Red, and Roe, in Islay, 114
 Denmark, ornithological notes from, with list of species observed, 81
Dentex vulgaris, 58; *asteriscus* of (fig. 2), 59
Dichromanessa rufa, 382
Dicrurus longicaudatus, 368
Diomedea exulans, 343; *melanophrys*, 343; *regia*, 343
 Dipper, Black-breasted, 123
Dipterygia pinastri, 430
 Diver, Black-throated, stomach-contents of a, 75
 Dog acting as foster-mother to young kitten (fig.), 375
 Dragonflies of South-west Surrey, 192
Drepane longimanus, 58; *asteriscus* of (fig. 3), 59
Dryocopus martius, 231
 Dugong, Queensland, 31
Eclectus polychlorus, 468
 Eel with Water-Vole fast in gullet, 453; Broad-nosed, a huge, 66
 Eggs, large clutches of, 226, 229; late, of Nightjar, 339, 392
 Egret in Britain, 150, 380
Elanoides furcatus, 270
Eluma purpurascens, 225
Emberiza citrinella, 97; *millicoria*, 97; *schœniclus*, 97
Erinaceus collaris, 325; *europæus*, variations in dentition of, 325; *micropus*, 326; *pictus*, 326
Erithacus rubecula, 96
*Erythromma naia*s, 194
Esox lucius, 57, 58, 60; *asteriscus* of (fig. 24), 59
Eupagurus bernhardus (*pubescens*) at Millport Station, 69
Exocætus pæcilopterus, 292, 293; otolith of (fig. 6), 293
Falco peregrinus, 75
 Fauna of Lundy Island, 267; Vertebrate, of Cheshire and Liverpool Bay, 234
 'Faune des Mammifères d'Europe,' 345
Felis pardus, 378
Festuca arundinacea, 430
 Fieldfare, late stay of, 227
 Fish-notes from Great Yarmouth for 1909, 63,—for 1910, 451; from South-west Hants, 200
 Fishes, *asterisci* from, 59; killed by lightning, 280; otoliths found in, 292; yawning of, 321; pharyngeal teeth of, 418

- Flamingo, 128
 Flycatcher, Spotted, 393
Fringilla coelebs, 97
Fulica atra, 98
Fuligula ferinoides, 125

Gadidæ, 61
Gadus callarius, 323; *luscus*, 58,—
 asteriscus of (fig. 17), 59; *morrhua*,
 295; *pollachius*, 323, 453; *virens*,
 323
Galathea strigosa at Millport Station,
 69
Galaxias brevipennis, 343
Galeus vulgaris, 64
Gallinago coelestis, 98
 Game-preserves, private, in United
 States, 278
Garrulus lanceolatus, 368
Gnophora rubricollis, 427
Gobius paganeillus, 293, 295; otolith
 of (fig. 5), 293
 Godwit, Black-tailed, in Co. Cork,
 34; in Cork Harbour, 116; at Cley,
 Norfolk, 393
 Goldsinny, Jago's (fig.), 451
Gomphocerus maculatus, 304; *rufus*,
 304; *sibericus*, 304
 Goose, Pacific or Black Brent, 123;
 Snow, 133
 Grebe, Great Crested, 77,—rearing
 three broods, 393; Slavonian, in
 Shropshire and Worcestershire, 75
 Gull, Black-headed, nesting in Col-
 chester Harbour, 137; Kittiwake,
 76; Lesser Black-backed, 77
 Gulls at Lley, 49, 106
 Gullet of fish, description of, with
 diagram, 420
Gymnorhina hyperleuca, 275
Gyps bengalensis, 368

 Habits, useless, formation of, in two
 British Newts, 161, 211; littoral
 feeding, of some land-birds, 323;
 of Chough, 391
Hadena basilinea, *hepatica*, *ophio-*
gramma, *polyodon*, *rurea*, *satura*,
scelopacina, *unanimis*, 430
Hæmatopus ostralegus, 98, 109
Halichærus gryphus, 114
Halicore dugong, 31; sp., 31
 Hants (South-west), notes from, 198
Haplophthalmus danicus, 223; *men-*
gii, 223
 Hare, Common, 115
Hecatesia fenestrata, 427
Heliophobus popularis, 431

 Herring fishery (Yarmouth) disap-
 pointing, 456, 459
 Heron, early building of, 340; breed-
 ing twice in the season, 341
Hirundo rustica, 97
 Horse, a sheep-killing, 433
 Hull Museum, recent valuable addi-
 tions to, 34
 Humble-bees and foxgloves, 327, 396
 Hybrid Carp, 63; between *Nyroca*
Duck and *Pochard*, 125
Hydrochelidon nigra, 98
Hydrocyon brevis, 294, 296; otolith
 of (fig. 7), 294
Hylophila prasinana, 428
Hypolais icterina, 96
Hyppolyte spinus, 460

 Ibis, Glossy, 74, 131, 135
 Incubation and fledging periods in
 birds, 117
 Insect-life, Indian, 40
 Insects, classification of, 40; "mimi-
 cry" of, 40; experiments on gener-
 ation of, 236; vocal and instru-
 mental music of, 299, 426
 IRELAND—Black-tailed Godwit, 34,
 116; Sandwich Tern, 228; White
 Wagtail, 228; Nightingale and
 Willow-Wren in captivity, 339;
 Herons, 340, 341; American Blue-
 winged Teal, 436
Irena puella, 463
Ischnura elegans, 194
 Islay, mammals of, 113, 157, 196, 267
Iñyx torquilla, 97

 Kestrel mobbed by Starlings, 392, 435
 Kingfisher, 76; colour of, 462
 Kite, Swallow-tailed, supposed oc-
 currence in Surrey, 270

Labridæ, 419
Labrus bergylta, 323; *maculatus*, 63,
 293, 295, 452,—otolith of (fig. 12),
 293
Lamna cornubica, 66, 453
Lamphygma exigua, 430
 Land-birds, littoral feeding-habits of,
 323
Lanius collurio, 97, 309
 Lark, Sky, at Cromer Lighthouse, 124
Larus argentatus, 98; *canus*, 98;
minutus, 98; *ridibundus*, 98, 137
Lates calcarifer, 35; *niloticus*, 418
Lepidosteus osseus, 57, 294, 296;
 otolith of (fig. 6), 294
Lepinotarsa, 441

- Lepus cuniculus*, 115; *europæus*, 115
Lestes sponsa, 194
Leucania albipuncta, *congrua*, *conigera*, *extranea*, *l-album*, *lithargyria*, *littoralis*, *loreyi*, *obsoleta*, *pal-lens*, *straminea*, *vitellina*, 429
Leuciscus erythrophthalmus, 323; *rutilus*, 58, 323,—*asteriscus* of (fig. 23), 59
Libellula depressa, 192; *quadrinaculata*, 192
Lichia amia, 58; *asteriscus* of (fig. 12), 59
Ligurinus chloris, 97
Limosa ægocephala, 98; *belgica*, 34; *lapponica*, 96
Linota cannabina, 97; *rufescens*, 269
Lithodes maia at Millport Station, 70
Lleyn, summer in, with notes on birds of district, 41, 99
Lobster, growths on, 70
Loligo rondeletti, 65
Lophius piscatorius, 418
Lopholatilus chamæleonticeps, 294, 295; *otolith* of (fig. 1), 294
Lophophanes melanolophus, 371
Lota vulgaris, 297
Loxia curvirostra, 33
Lundy Island, fauna of, 267
Lutra vulgaris, 114

Machetes pugnax, 98, 159
Macgillivray, William, 344
Malacoclemmys palustris, 437
Mammals of Islay, 113, 157, 196, 267; British, 440
Mania maura, 429
Marine Zoological Station, Millport, notes from, 69, 321
Martin, House, mortality among, 310; Sand, 76
Mecostethus alliaceus, 305
Melanchra brassicæ, 430; *persicariæ*, 430
Melipolis sinualis, 430
Mergus serrator, 97
Merluccius vulgaris, 58; *asteriscus* of (fig. 16), 59
Metoponorthus pruinus, 224
Miana furuncula, 430
Mice, a local race of light-coloured, 471
Microtis agrestis, 115
Migration of birds, 129, 132
Mitochondria miniata, 427
Milvus govinda, 374; *ictinus*, 341
Molge cristata, 161, 211; *palmata*, 161, 211

Mollusca, British Nudibranchiate, 438
Morone labrax, 292, 293, 423; (fig.), 424; *otolith* of (fig. 8), 293
Motacilla alba, 96, 228, 230; *flava*, 96; *melanope*, 230
Motella mustela, 66
Mouse, House, 115; Long-tailed Field, 115; Yellow-necked, on the validity of, to rank as a species, 241
Mugil capito, 58; *asteriscus* of (fig.), 59
Mullus barbatus, 58; *asteriscus* of (fig. 4), 59
Mus decumanus, 115; *flavicollis*, 346, 433, 471,—description of, 241; *flavicollis wintoni*, 244; *hirtensis*, 246; *musculus*, 115, 433; *rattus*, 435; *sylvaticus*, 241, 307, 346, 433
Muscicapa atricapilla, 97; *grisola*, 97
parva, 97
Musiphagidæ, 463
Music, vocal and instrumental, of insects, 299, 426
Mustela erminea, 113
Mustelus vulgaris, 65
Mygale stridularis, 431
Myotis bechsteini, 30, 74
Myripristis murdjan, 295

Naja bungaris (*Ophiophagus elaps*), 438
Natural History Record Bureau, the Museum, Carlisle, 183
Nature Tales, &c., 80
Nesonetta aucklandica, 343
Nest, strange, of Blackbird, 226
Nest-boxes, notes on, 315
Nesting of Common Wren, 158, 196; Rook, 227; Common Tern and Black-headed Gull in Colchester Harbour, 137; Short-eared Owl in Essex, 270; Crossbill in Bedfordshire, 472
Nesting-site, curious, 269
Newts, two British, formation of useless habits in, with observations on their general behaviour (five figs.), 161, 211
New Zealand, breeding of Terns at Omaui; Subantarctic Islands of, 342
Nightingale in Lancashire, 308; in captivity, 339
Nightjar, late eggs of, 339, 392
Noctuidæ spp., 430
Nonagria dissoluta, 429
Norfolk, ornithological report for 1909, 121, 197
Numenius arquata, 98; *phæopus*, 98

OBITUARY:—

- KING EDWARD VII. (to face p. 160)
 Boyd, Alexander, Lieut., 316
 Hearder, William, 273
 Saunders, Edward, 77
 Sharpe, Richard Bowdler, Dr.
 (with portrait), 35
Ædicnemus scolopax, 227
 Omaui islet, New Zealand, Terns on,
 279
Omocestus ventralis, 301; *viridulus*,
 300
Oniscus asellus, 224
 Oriole, Golden, in Norfolk, 131,—in
 Westmorland, 184
Oriolus galbula, 184
 Ornithological notes from Chester,
 75; Denmark, 81; Hants (South-
 west), 198; Surrey (North-east),
 75; Wales, 310, 341
 Ornithology of Oxfordshire, notes on
 (1909), 281
Orthagoriscus mola, 67, 418
Orthetrum cærulescens, 193
 Orthoptera, Catalogue of, 276
Orthosia aurago, 429; *flavago*, 429,
 431; *lota*, *macilenta*, *pistacina*,
ypsilon, 429
Oscanius (*Pleurobranchus*) mem-
 branaceus at Millport Station, 71
Osmerus eperlanus, 66, 292, 293, 295;
 otolith of (fig. 13), 293
Osmylus fulvicephalus, 231
 Otoliths found in fishes, comparisons
 of, 292
Otolithus maculatus, 58, 293, 296;
 asteriscus of (fig. 9), 59; otolith
 of (fig. 17), 293
 Otter, 114
 Owl, Barn, luminous, 122,—food of,
 136; Short-eared, nesting in Essex,
 270
 Oystercatcher, preliminary note on
 the manner in which it attacks the
 Purple-Shell, 109
Pagellus centrodontus, 293, 295,—
 auditory organs of (fig.), 62,—oto-
 lith of (fig.), 293; *erythrinus*, 58,—
 asteriscus of (fig. 6), 59
Pandalus annulicornis, 63, 68
Pandion haliaëtus, 75
Panurus biarmicus, 74
Parorchestia sylvicola, 343
Parus ater, 230; *cæruleus*, 96, 230;
 major, 96, 207, 230; *palustris*, 230
Passer domesticus, 97, 339, 371;
montanus, 97
Pelamys sarda, 58, 292, 933; at
 Great Yarmouth (fig.), 454, 455;
 asteriscus of (fig. 13), 59; otolith
 of (fig. 1), 293
Perca fluviatilis, 60
Perdix cinerea, 98
Pericallia matronula, 426
Pericrotus brevirostris, 364
Pernis apivorus, 34, 97
Petromyzon marinus, 452
 Phalarope, Grey, 76
 Pharyngeal teeth of fishes (Plate II.),
 418
Phasianus colchicus, 98
Philoscia muscorum, 223, 224; *pa-
 tiencie*, 225
Phlogophora meticulosa, 429
Phoca vitulina, 114, 268
Phylloscopus rufus, 158; *sibilatrix*,
 96; *trochilus*, 96
Pica rustica, 97
 Pigeon, Wood, diphtheria in, 135
 Pincer-claws, malformed, of Edible
 Crab (fig.), 460
 Pipit, Rock, 105
Pitta moluccensis (cyanoptera), 463
Plagioscion surinamensis, 293, 296;
 otolith of (fig. 18), 293
Plegadis falcinellus, 74
Pleuronectes flexus, 63; *limanda*, 63,
 323, 452; *microcephalus*, 452; *pla-
 tessa*, 323
 Plover, Golden, 77; Ringed, intel-
 ligence in protecting its young, 100
 Plumage of water-birds, 201
Pneumora, 306
 Pochard, 77
Podiceps auritus, 75; *cristatus*, 77,
 98, 393
Polypterus senegalus, 294, 296; oto-
 lith of (fig. 5), 294
Porcellio dilatatus, 223, 224; *rath-
 kei*, 224; *scaber*, 224
Portunus puber, 461
Pratincola rubetra, 96
Pseudoscarus muricatus, 418
Pterimocytyus sp., 426
Pteropus edwardsii, 373
 Puffin-warren on St. Tudwal's islands,
 Lley, 41
Purpura lapillus, 109
 Pyrenees, *Vipera berus* in, 266
Pyrrhocorax graculus, 391
Pyrrhosoma nymphula, 194
 Queensland, Dugong, 31; Giant Perch
 ("Barramundi"), 35
Querquedula ciria, 97; *crecca*, 97

- Rabbits in Islay, 115
Raia alba, 64; *clavata*, 323
Raphicerus campestris, 377
Recessus utriculi, 58
Recurvirostra avocetta, 98
 Redpoll, Lesser, at Hampstead, 269, 310
 Redstart, 76, 295
 Reeve in Gloucestershire, 159
 Reptiles of the world, 437
 Rhizopoda and Heliozoa, British Freshwater, 238
 Rhododendrons, an introduced pest to, 395
 Rodents, yawning of, 391, 435
 Rook, nesting of, 227

Salamandra atra, 443, 444, 445; *maculosa*, 443, 444, 445, 446
Salmo fario, 160; *trutta*, 160
Salmo salar, 293, 295; otolith of (fig. 14), 293
 Salmon, &c., life-history and habits of, 160
 Sandpiper, Purple, stomach-contents of, 324
Saxicola oenanthe, 96
 Scandinavian Woodlice, records of some, 223
Sciaena aquila, 418
Scomber concolor, 64, 453; *scomber* var. *scriptus*, 453
Scorpena dactyloptera, 64; *scrofa*, 58; asteriscus of (fig. 8), 59
 Scotch Islands, Common Shrew on, 113, 157, 196, 267
 SCOTLAND—Millport Marine Zoological Station, 69, 321; Wolf, 72; Common Shrew, &c., 113, 157, 196, 267; Wren, 196; Incubation and fledging periods in birds, 117; Willow-Wrens of a Lothian wood, 401
 Sea-Trout, 160
 Seal, Common, 114,—on Somerset coast, 268; Grey, 114
Sebastes norvegicus, 58, 293, 294, 453; asteriscus of (fig. 7); otolith of (fig. 10), 293
Serranidae, 61
Serranus gigas (Plate II., fig. 1), 58, 421,—asteriscus of (fig. 1), 59; scriba (Plate II., fig. 2), 421
Setina aurita, 427; sp.?, 427
 Shearwater, notes on young of, 101
 Shrew, Common, 113, 157, 196, 267,—“Hardistrow,” a name for, 116; Lesser, 113, 157,—in Bedfordshire, 158; Pigmy, 267

 Shrike, Red-backed, breeding in Merionethshire, 309; nest and young (fig.), 309
Simenchelys parasiticus, 294, 298; otolith of (fig. 2), 294
 Smelt fishery (Yarmouth) for 1909, 67; for 1910, 459
Solea vulgaris, 58; asteriscus of (fig. 18), 59
Solen siliqua at Millport Station, 71
Sorex araneus, 113, 157, 196, 267, 307; *minutus*, 113, 157, 158, 267; *ramifer*, 307
Sparidae, 419
Spatula clypeata, 97
 Spessart (Bavaria), bird-life in, 229
Sphenocerus sphenurus, 368
 Squirrel, intelligence of a, 434
 Starling at Cromer lighthouse, 124; havoc wrought by, 144; stomach-contents of a (fig.), 147, 324; immense numbers of, near Keighley, 338
Stauroderus biguttulus, 301; *scalaris*, 299
Stenobothrus apterus? (brachypterus?), 305; *lineatus*, 301
Stephanitis rhododendri (fig.), 395
Sterna anglica, 98; *cantiaca*, 98; *fluvialis*, 98, 137; *macrura*, 98; *minuta*, 98
Stethophyma grossum, 305
 Stick-insect, an undetermined species of, found in Devonshire (fig.), 197
 Sticklebacks born in a bottle, 453
 Stoat, 113
 Stoats (?) attacking Lapwings, 226
 Stoats and Weasels hunting together, 267
 Stone-Crab, growths on, 70
Strepsilas interpres, 98
Stromateus niger, 419
Sturnus vulgaris, 97, 144
Suberites domuncula, 69; *prideaux*, 69
Sula bassana, 340, 472
 Surrey (North-east), observations in, 75
 Swallow, 76
 Swan, Whooper, 183, 186, 188, 191
 Swan-marks, 159
 Swift, Alpine, 130
 Swine husbandry and bacon production, 119
Sylvia cinerea, 96; *hortensis*, 96
Sympetrum vulgatum, 193
Synodontis schal, 294; otolith of (fig. 3), 294

- Tadorna cornuta*, 97
 Teal, American Blue-winged, in Co. Cork, 436
 Tern, Black, 393; Common, 77,—nesting in Colchester Harbour, 137; Sandwich, in Ireland, 228
 Terns feeding upon Sticklebacks, 229; breeding at Omani, an islet in New Zealand, 279
Tetrao tetrix, 23, 51, 176, 248
 Thrush, Mistle, 226
Thymallus vulgaris, 293, 295; otolith of (fig. 15), 293
 Tidal waters, Man and Nature on, 39
Tinca tinca, 58; asteriscus of (fig. 20), 59
Tinnunculus alaudarius, 97
 Tit, Bearded, reappearance in an old haunt, 74; Coal, 76; Great, notes on breeding of, 207,—young, twenty-two days old (fig.), 208
Totanus calidris, 98; *glareola*, 98
Trachinus draco, 295; *vipera*, 65
Trachurus trachurus, 65, 455
Tragelaphus scriptus var. *sylvaticus*, 377
Trichoniscus linearis, 225; *pusillus*, 223; *pygmaeus*, 223, 224, 225; *roseus*, 223; *spinosus*, 225; *stebbingi*, 225
Trigla cuculus, 18; asteriscus of (fig. 14), 59
Tringa alpina, 98
Tringoides hypoleucus, 98
Troglodytes parvulus, 96, 158, 196
Trygon pastinaca, 64
Turdus merula, 96; *musicus*, 96; *pilaris*, 227; *viscivorus*, 226
 United States, private game-preserves in, 278; bird and mammal reservations in Alaska, 278
Uranoscopus scaber, 295
Urocissa occipitalis, 372
Vanellus vulgaris, 98
Vanessa urticae, 442
 Variety of *Accentor*, Hedge, 135; Bunting, 471; Coot, 135; Dab, Smeared, 452; Fieldfare, 191; Gannet, 340, 472; Mole, 157, 200; Mouse, Wood, 307; Otter, 114, 157; Partridge, 135; Pipit, Rock (eggs), 105; Shrew, Common, 307,—Water, 307; Sparrow, House, 339; Starling, 135, 189; Viper, Common, 394; Wagtail, Pied, 135
Vesperugo pipistrellus, 113
 Viper, Common, rare variety of, 394
Vipera berus in Pyrenees, 266
 Vole, Field, 115; Water, 115
 Wagtail, Blue-headed, in Denmark, 95; White, 76,—in Denmark, 95,—in Ireland, 228; Yellow, 76,—in Anglesey, 312
 WALES—Birds of Lley, 41, 99; Curious nesting-site, 269; Wood-Mouse, 307; Red-backed Shrike, 309; Ornithological ramble, 310, 341
 Warbler, Barred, 393; Willow, 76
 Water-birds, mechanism of plumage in, 201
 Waterhouse, Mr. C. O., presentation to, on his official retirement from British Museum, 271
 Weasels and Stoats hunting together, 267
 Whale, six fetuses in, 268
 Wheatear, 76
 Whinchat, 76
 White River, Transvaal, impressions of a naturalist on, 377
 Willow-Wrens of a Lothian wood, 401; map of, showing position of nests in 1910, 405
 Wolf in Scotland and elsewhere, 72
 Woodlice, Scandinavian, records of some, 223
 Wren, Common, nesting of, 158; Willow, in captivity, 339
 Yarmouth, Great, fish-notes from, for 1909, 63; for 1910, 451
 Yawning of fishes, &c., 321, 384, 391, 435
 Yorkshire, notes from, 337

CONTENTS.

xvii

PLATES.

	PAGE
Plate I. Skylarks and Starlings at Cromer Lighthouse . . . to face	121
„ II. { Mouths of <i>Serranus gigas</i> , right half (Fig. 1); <i>Serranus scriba</i> (Fig. 2); <i>Apogon rex mul-</i> <i>lorum</i> (Fig. 3); <i>Centropristes hepatus</i> (Fig. 4) }	418

ILLUSTRATIONS IN TEXT.

Portrait of Dr. Richard Bowdler Sharpe	37
Asterisci from skulls of Teleostean Fishes (twenty-five figures)	59
Auditory Organs of <i>Pagellus centrodontus</i>	62
Cone detached from Scotch-fir by Crossbill	129
Newly-sown wheat, molluscs, and triturated material contained in the stomachs of seven Starlings	147
Five figures (pp. 162, 163, 166, 169, 174) to illustrate paper on the formation of useless habits in <i>Molge cristata</i> and <i>M. palmata</i>	161
Young Great Tits, twenty-two days old	208
Otoliths taken from Fishes (nineteen figures)	293
Otoliths taken from Fishes (seven figures)	294
Nest and Young of Red-backed Shrike	309
Dog acting as Foster-mother to young Kitten	375
<i>Stephanitis rhododendri</i> , Horv.	395
Willow-Wrens of a Lothian Wood: Map showing position of Nests	405
Diagram typical of left half of a Fish's Gullet, defining branchial arches and bones	420
Mouth of <i>Morone labrax</i>	424
Jago's Goldsinny (<i>Ctenolabrus rupestris</i>)	451
<i>Pelamys sarda</i>	454
Malformed Pincer-claws of Edible Crabs	460
Diagram of barb or ramus of a Kingfisher's blue feather	464

